



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF



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20 JANUARY 1966

~~TOP SECRET~~

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1. Vietnam

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2. South Vietnam

There is more talk in Saigon about unseating Premier Ky. Ambassador Lodge points out that some of this is generated by Ky's relative longevity (seven months, so far) and by the "peace offensive" which has stirred politicians to think about a post-settlement government. The Vietnamese New Year, a traditional time for settling accounts, could also be a factor. There were coups just before the New Year in 1964 and 1965.

Lodge thinks that the chances for a successful move against Ky are relatively slim so long as the top generals stick together.

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3. North Vietnam

High-altitude photography taken late last year shows a major military construction project under way in the hills northwest of Yen Bai (see map).

The photography shows a newly constructed storage area containing at least 285 buildings in widely dispersed locations. The area is serviced by an intricate road network still being built. A large number of trenches, foxholes, and other defensive positions are nearby.

The project may well be one of the jobs undertaken by the Chinese Communist engineer units which are believed to have moved into this general area since October. Activity similar to this, but on a smaller scale, has been detected in photography of the rail line from Hanoi northeast to the Chinese border at Ping Hsiang.

4. Indonesia

Sukarno told a delegation of left-wing students today that he would not retreat "even one millimeter" despite pressure from "reactionaries." He again called for the formation of a "Sukarno front."

Sukarno's support from the surviving leftist organizations seems feeble. He can continue to play, however, on the army's reluctance to face him openly. The army today cancelled a mass meeting which apparently would have continued the series of demonstrations against leading members of Sukarno's entourage.

5. Yemen

The slow-paced peace conference between royalist and republican factions, which was to reconvene shortly after this weekend, may stay in recess for some time yet. The Saudis are pressing Cairo for a more specific agreement on the nature of an interim Yemeni Government and say they will not let the conference resume until they get one. Nasir in turn says that he cannot begin withdrawing Egyptian troops from Yemen--the main thing that the Saudis want--until after an interim government is formed.

6. Rhodesia

Another cut in the gasoline ration was announced today in Salisbury. Smith had made reassuring statements on this score at a televised news conference only a few days ago.

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7. Congo

The honeymoon period evidently is over for General Mobutu's regime. Critics complain that he is not getting out to the provinces, as Tshombé did, and that he is closeted too much with a few advisers, mostly Belgians.

At this stage, Mobutu's opponents seem merely to be talking. Mobutu could well run into real trouble, however, if he carries out a plan [] to expel unemployed persons from the capital and other cities. This touchy move, in which the army would play a major part, is scheduled for the end of this month.

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8. Nigeria

Our embassy in Lagos and the US consulates in the various regions report all quiet in their areas. Food prices in the capital have risen sharply, however, indicating considerable subsurface worry among the population.

A clearer picture may emerge when we see the results of a meeting General Ironsi held today with his regional military governors.

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9. Dominican Republic

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10. Cuba

The formation of a "Latin American Solidarity Organization" was announced yesterday in Havana. The organization is to cooperate with "the most active anti-imperialist groups" and is to plan a conference in 1967.

This comes in the wake of Fidel Castro's speech closing the Tri-Continent Conference last week, in which he made his most explicit call for armed revolution in more than a year. All this strongly suggests that Havana is again playing up its interest in insurgency in Latin American after treating it in lower key for some months.

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